

CITIZEN ALERT

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The Honorable Spencer Abraham
Secretary of Energy
1000 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretary Abraham:

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We are writing this letter to implore you not to allow the Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management (OCRWM) to use the Preliminary Site Suitability Evaluation report (PSSE) comment period as the final opportunity for public comment on the Yucca Mt. Project. At this point in time, the hearings for both Amargosa Valley and Pahrump have been rescheduled for Monday the 24th of September.

First, if the DOE really wants the American people to believe in and trust them, then it is time to do more than the bare minimum legal requirements and hold hearings that are not disrespectful to the people who would be the most affected. We do not consider public meetings after the end of the official comment period is over, able to "provide Nevada citizens reasonable opportunities to participate in the public comment process". We are asking that hearings not be conducted until after the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) is issued with transportation issues fully addressed. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) hearings were held all over the country. All affected people, including those along possible transportation routes, must have adequate time to read, evaluate, and comment on the document. It is clear that people outside of Nevada are very much concerned about this project. Indeed, for the Las Vegas hearing on 9/5/01, people came to Nevada from all over the country to make comments. Many Nevadans were not able to speak due to the insufficiency of time and the huge, overflow crowd that should have been anticipated by DOE.

Secondly, this nation is under extreme emotional duress right now. To continue the hearing process at this time, places an undue hardship on Nevadans and people around the country. The Yucca Mt. Project is a highly charged subject in Nevada, as we are sure you are aware. We (the public) have been asked again and again to make comment on numerous documents, usually with insufficient notice and time for document review, and comments. We always rally and try to do our best. We have yet to receive response to our DEIS comments. (We are told that our comments and concerns will be addressed in the FEIS). Maybe that is why you repeatedly hear the same comments made.

The fifteen day extension is not nearly enough time. We at Citizen Alert have repeatedly asked for hard copy of the PSSE and still have not received it. The PSSE has not

been made available to people in a useable form for review. Lake Barrett even testified to the U.S. Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board that while the DOE considers the PSSE "a legal document," it clearly, "is not a good communicative document."

If the DOE truly believes that Yucca Mt. is the right place for the nation's high-level nuclear waste then please, do right by yourselves and this country and wait for all the information to be in before moving to site recommendation. It is obvious from the technical exchanges with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and the presentations at the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board, that the DOE is not ready, scientifically or otherwise, to go forward with site recommendation. Please, do not move ahead on a timeline that is blind and insensitive to what really matters at this time. —PEOPLE—and the healing of our Nation.

In this time of uncertainty, no one knows what will happen tomorrow or the next day. Will we go to war? With whom? How will it be fought? It is perfectly reasonable to think that America's nuclear program will undergo changes. It is time for all people, in government and regular citizens alike to be sensitive and caring towards one another. It is time for the DOE now to be sensitive and non-aggressive towards the people it is supposed to serve.

Sincerely

Kalynda Tilges
Nuclear Issues Coordinator
Citizen Alert - Las Vegas

P.O.Box 17173
Las Vegas, NV 89114
702-796-5662
702-796-4886 Fax

cc:

President George W. Bush - 202-456-2461
Senator Harry Reid - 202-224-7327
Senator John Ensign - 202-228-2193
Congresswoman Shelley Berkley - 202-225-3119
Congressman Jim Gibbons - 202-225-5679
Governor Kenny Guinn - 775-684-5683
Lake Barrett, acting director OCRWM - 202-586-9987

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